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RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
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DOE FOR CAROLYN GAY

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: YAR'ADUA BEGINS MOVES ON GON MASTER PLAN ON NIGER
DELTA

Classified By: Ambassador Robin R. Sanders for Reasons 1.4 (b and d)

11. (C) Summary: The office of Nigerian Vice President Goodluck Jonathan plans a retreat to discuss the Niger Delta Master Plan December 13-14 in Geneva, Switzerland. Ministers, international experts on conflict resolution and others will focus on ways to promote accountability, gauge performance, and implement the plan. End Summary.

12. (C) At a Public Affairs Section (PAS) reception for U.S. health journalism trainers on December 4, Ambassador and Public Affairs Officer (PAO) were told by Nigerian-born AMCIT Emeka Okoli (protect) that Mr. Nze Akachukwu Nwankpo, Senior Special Advisor to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan, is organizing a two day retreat on the Niger Delta Master Plan which President Yar'Adua has committed to reviewing and implementing. The retreat will be held in Geneva, Switzerland December 13-14, and facilitated by Edward DeBono, the internationally-renowned "father of lateral thinking." In a conversation with PAO and Poloff on December 7, Okoli further explained that a select group of approximately 15 Nigerians, including Minister of Defense Yazule Ahmed; Federal Capital Territory Minister Aliyu Modibbo Umar; the Chief Executive Officer of the Niger Delta Development Commission Timi Alaibe, and Oronto Douglas, Director of the Niger Delta Desk for Vice President Jonathan, will also attend. Dr. Okoli, who has been invited to attend, is an expert in conflict management and resolution; as a Fulbright scholar, he set up the University of Abuja's conflict resolution program in 2005-2006.

13. (C) According to Okoli, the invited experts will vet the Niger Delta Master Plan and conduct a stakeholder mapping and analysis exercise. The group will consider ethnicity and the role of civil society in an effort to address key issues in the region. "It is all about accountability and implementation," Okoli told PAO and Poloff. The experts will design a structure or template that "they can work with on the ground to gauge performance." The mechanism will include ways to monitor deliverables for the region by means of benchmarks and regular results reporting.

14. (C) COMMENT: Yar'Adua is trying to begin to move the Delta process along by having VP Jonathan seek to address the issue, one of Nigeria's most complex and intractable problems. DeBono is an international heavyweight in creative and constructive thinking; Douglas, a well-known Ijaw human

rights attorney and environmental activist; and Nwankpo and Okoli, both ethnic Igbos, are experts in the field of conflict management. Following Jonathan's many listening tours to the region, the retreat seems intended to be the first step toward turning the Niger Delta Master Plan into solutions to the region's problems. Although they are trying to keep the retreat low key so as to not raise expectations, it may prove to be a step in the right direction by Yar'Adua.

We will see what comes out of this and how the GON plans to transform recommendations from the retreat into concrete actions. END COMMENT.

SANDERS